

**TOWN OF NEWFIELDS SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 2, 2021**

***Select Board Present: Betsy Coes, Jacquelyn Silvani & Michael Sununu
Others Include: Sam Burchill, Mary Belanger, Lynne Sweet***

The Board entered non-public session at 6:30

The Select Board, by motion of Select Board Member Sununu, seconded by Select Board Member Coes and in accordance with RSA91-A:3 (II) (a), to enter into a non-public session for purpose of personnel matter – Police Chief [RSA91-A3(II)(a)]. By roll call vote the Board passed the motion: Coes-Affirmative; Silvani-Affirmative; Sununu-Affirmative

A motion to leave non-public session was made by Michael and seconded by Betsy. The motion was passed and at 7:03 a public session convened.

Call to order at 7:06 pm.

The Select Board reviewed and approved the following items:

Checks Dated 01/05/21: Accounts Payable Manifest \$2,141.04

Lynne and Sam, Cemetery Trustees, presented their 2022 budget to the Board. Their budget remained the same as last year, at \$31,515.00. The Trustees requested to use the same groundskeeper for the upcoming year instead of sending it out to bid. They are satisfied with the contractor's work and his bid was much lower than others in the past. Lynne informed everyone that the Rt. 108 cemetery is the only one with plots available. The price per lot is \$500 for residents and \$1,000 for non-residents.

The Trustees notified the Board that the tree service which was to remove some trees in the Hilton cemetery was unable to do so due to the Northeaster that came through recently but should take care of it prior to the end of the year. Michael informed those in attendance that the Town is required to maintain the Hilton cemetery as part of the requirement when the land was donated to the Town for conservation.

The Board deferred choosing a date/time for the swearing in of Chief of Police, Wayne Young until the paperwork is finalized. At that time, residents will be informed in advance to allow those who wish to attend to meet the new Chief.

Michael moved the discussion to finalization of the tax rate. Michael explained that the December tax bill will reflect the final rate set tonight, based upon expenditures and Warrant Articles that were approved this past March, and the MS434 received from the State as to the Town's revenue expectations – which are much higher than last year. Then adjusting for Veteran's credits and the

overlay of \$20,000. By Michael's calculation the tax rate would fall out to \$3.93. He added that in the past, the Board would utilize unassigned funds to offset the overlay and Veteran's credits. Michael recommended utilizing \$64k of the unassigned fund balance to reduce the tax rate to \$3.72. This would then equal a 2% tax increase year over year. Michael added that the unassigned fund balance is quite large. It will be, without adjustments, \$1,048,000 which puts it at 16.6%; the State caps it at 17%.

Michael suggested, after the prior discussion with the Fire Department about possible on-call stipends or contracting out service, this year is not the best time to be aggressive with the funds. It would be best to utilize it next year, or the year after, when it will be needed more, when \$50-70k is added to the budget.

Michael motioned to utilize the \$64k from the unassigned fund balance.

Betsy felt the expected Fire department increases should be through a Warrant Article and not as a budget line item.

Michael recognized that losing the Fire department would be a serious issue for the homeowners of the Town. He would rather it be included as a line item to assure that it would be maintained and not affect insurance rates. Betsy reiterated her preference for it being a Warrant Article.

Jacqui asked to postpone the decision until next week to allow more time to familiarize herself with the information. The Board agreed to defer finalizing the tax rate until the next meeting.

Michael motioned, seconded by Betsy to sign the 2022 Health Trust Insurance Policy. All were in favor and the motion carried.

The Board reviewed October's Revenues and Expenses.

Betsy mentioned that she spoke with Sue McKinnon earlier to have keys made to the Town Office for herself and Jacqui in case Michael, the only one with a key, was ever unable to attend a meeting. Michael said that he assumed that was addressed when they were sworn in.

Michael updated the Board on the Water Sewer District/DES/Hoyle Tanner meeting to address the General Permit for Great Bay Nitrogen. The Town has agreed to fall under the permit. Michael reminded those attending of the push coming from EPA/DES for all towns with Water Treatment plants to fall under the regulatory authority of DES/EPA & to agree to a general permit to address the nitrogen in Great Bay. There is now encouragement at the Town level to address this issue – i.e., storm water, culverts, maintenance, Planning board regulations for new development & ordinances. It now becomes a Town responsibility to work with the Water District to resolve this issue.

Michael added, fifty-four municipalities are under the watershed, only twelve districts fall under this permit. None of the cost involved are eligible for GOFRR funding. Most of the cost will fall to the town, approximately 5k a year. Michael reached out to John Hayden informing him that the Planning department, Water Sewer District, and the Road Agent will need to meet and discuss the

planning and the reporting required to the State. Someone within these three groups will need to take the responsibility of managing this issue.

Michael and Betsy then answered Jacqui's questions about the Budget/Warrant Articles process and deadlines.

Michael motioned, seconded by Betsy, to approve the 10/26/21 Select Board Meeting Minutes, as amended. All were in favor and the motion carried.

At 7:48 pm, Michael motioned, seconded by Betsy, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kisha Therrien